

SILVERBELL WEST WATER SYSTEM 10-162



2001 Annual Water Quality Report

Water Quality Management Division



CITY OF TUCSON WATER DEPARTMENT
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WHAT CONTAMINANTS HAVE BEEN DETECTED IN OUR DRINKING WATER?

Tucson Water regularly samples the drinking water that is delivered to you. Much of this testing is required by drinking water regulations. In addition to this required monitoring, we perform a great deal of discretionary monitoring in order to provide both Tucson Water staff and customers with additional information. The table below lists all contaminants that were detected in both the required and discretionary drinking water monitoring.

Two inorganic contaminants of special interest are arsenic and fluoride, which are naturally occurring. Please see the detected contaminants table and the specific explanations which follow the table for more information.

It is important to remember that the detection of a contaminant in drinking water does not necessarily represent a threat to public health. Current technology allows water utilities to detect extremely low levels of contaminants in drinking water. A detected result means a concentration that is above the minimum value that can be measured by the laboratory.

In most cases, the minimum detectable level of a contaminant is well below the USEPA regulatory limit for that contaminant. To compare the detected amount with the amount allowed by the USEPA, refer to the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) column in the table. (Because the vast majority of regulated contaminants were not detectable in drinking water delivered by Tucson Water, the non-detected results were not included in this table. For a complete list of all USEPA regulated contaminants, contact the USEPA at 1-800-426-4791 or visit the USEPA website at www.epa.gov/safewater/creg/html)

Detected Contaminants Table

Contaminant	Minimum	Maximum	Average	MCL	MCLG	Major Sources
Inorganics						
Arsenic, Total ¹	18 ppb	26 ppb	22 ppb	50 ppb**	None	Natural deposits, see information on detected contaminants
Barium	0.074 ppm	0.08 ppm	0.077 ppm	2 ppm	2 ppm	Natural deposits
Chromium	6.9 ppb	< 20 ppb	6.9 ppb	100 ppb	100 ppb	Natural deposits
Fluoride ¹	1.2 ppm	2.2 ppm	1.5 ppm	4 ppm	4 ppm	Natural deposits
Nitrate (as N)	0.98 ppm	1 ppm	0.99 ppm	10 ppm	10 ppm	Natural deposits; septic tanks; agriculture; sewage
Radiochemical						
Adjusted Gross Alpha	0.3 pCi/L	0.3 pCi/L	0.3 pCi/L	15 pCi/L	0 pCi/L	Natural deposits
Radon Activity ²	379 pCi/L	404 pCi/L	392 pCi/L	No MCL	None	Natural deposits
Uranium	3.8 pCi/L	3.8 pCi/L	3.8 pCi/L	30 pCi/L	0 pCi/L	Natural deposits

Contaminant	No. of Samples Above the Action Level	90 th Percentile Value	Action Level	MCLG	Major Sources
Lead and Copper in Standing Water Samples - 2001					
Lead	None	2.5 ppb	15 ppb	0	Corrosion of household plumbing systems
Copper	None	0.025 ppm	1.3 ppm	1.3 ppm	Corrosion of household plumbing systems

¹ Data contains information gathered from a non-compliance sampling location within the distribution system.

² Data from 2000. No testing was performed for Radon in 2001.

** On 10/31/02, EPA finalized a reduced MCL of 10ppb that water providers must meet beginning January 2006.

DEFINITIONS OF TECHNICAL AND REGULATORY TERMS

Action level Concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers a treatment or other requirement which a water system must follow.

Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology. If a contaminant is believed to cause health concerns in humans, then the MCL is set as close as practical to zero and at an acceptable level of risk. Generally, the maximum acceptable risk of cancer is 1 in 10,000 with 70 years of exposure.

Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG) The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

Parts Per Billion (ppb) Some constituents in water are measured in very small units. Organic compounds such as trihalomethanes are monitored by Tucson Water in terms of parts per billion (or micrograms per liter). To help you visualize how very small this unit is, we offer the following illustrations. One part per billion equals: One second of time in 31.7 years or the first 16 inches of a trip to the moon.

Parts Per Million (ppm) Many dissolved minerals such as sodium and calcium are monitored by Tucson Water in terms of parts per million (or milligrams per liter). To help you visualize how very small this unit is, we offer the following illustrations. One part per million equals: 2 ounces of water in a typical 15,000 gallon backyard swimming pool or one second of time in 11.6 days.

Picocurie Per Liter (pCi/L) The quantity of radioactive material in one liter which produces 2.22 nuclear disintegrations per minute.

ND Non-detect

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON DETECTED CONTAMINANTS

Arsenic EPA recently finalized a reduction in the arsenic drinking water standard from 50 ppb down to 10 ppb. All water utilities must meet this new standard beginning January 2006. Some people who drink water containing arsenic in excess of the future MCL over many years could experience skin damage or problems with their circulatory system, and may have an increased risk of getting cancer.

To prepare for the lower standard Tucson Water is participating in studies to determine the feasibility of using small treatment units installed under the sink for removing arsenic from your drinking water. Tucson Water staff is seeking participants who will be interested in having a unit installed at their home. For more details please see the flyer from our director, David Modeer. Please feel free to contact us for more information regarding this important study.

Barium occurs naturally at very low concentrations in our groundwater.

Chromium is a trace metal and essential nutrient; however, it can be toxic at high concentrations greater than the MCL especially in the hexavalent form, which is more common when the source is industrial waste.

Fluoride During 2001, we collected 13 samples from the Silverbell system. The results ranged from 1.2 ppm to 2.2 ppm, with an average of 1.53 ppm.

Tucson Water is providing this special notice to parents of children under the age of nine who live in the Silverbell West area. At levels around 1.0 ppm, fluoride can help prevent cavities. However, children whose permanent teeth are still developing and whose drinking water contains more than 2.0 ppm of fluoride may develop a cosmetic discoloration of their permanent teeth (dental fluorosis).

While the average fluoride level in the drinking water provided in the Silverbell system in 2001 was 1.53 ppm, on one occasion it exceeded 2.0 ppm (also the first sample in 2002, collected 1/28, had fluoride at 2.1 ppm). At the current level there is some concern that additional exposure to fluoride from swallowing fluoridated toothpaste or by taking fluoride supplements may present a risk of fluorosis in children less than nine years old. Public health authorities advise against fluoride supplements if your water contains more than 1.0 ppm. You may want to contact your dentist for more specific recommendations for reducing the risk of cosmetic discoloration while maintaining protection against dental cavities. Tucson Water will be collecting monthly samples for fluoride and will be notifying you if the average fluoride level increases above 2 ppm. If you would like more information on fluoride, please contact us at the number given at the end of this report.

Nitrate is a form of nitrogen and an important plant nutrient. Nitrate in drinking water at levels above 10 ppm is a health risk for infants of less than six months of age.

Lead and Copper are naturally occurring metals, which are generally found at very low levels in some waters. However, these levels can increase when water contacts plumbing

materials containing lead pipe, lead soldered copper tubing, or brass. Infants and young children are typically more vulnerable to lead in drinking water than the general population. While Tucson Water is well within standards, concerned customers can take an extra precaution to protect children from lead leached from new brass faucets by running the water for a few seconds and using the water for something other than drinking. This is especially important if the water has been sitting in the pipes for a few hours or more.

Alpha emitters are a measure of radioactivity due to naturally occurring minerals in groundwater. The MCL for gross alpha radioactivity is set at 15 picocuries per liter (pCi/l). This excludes the radioactivity contributed by either radon or uranium.

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that may cause cancer, and may be found in drinking water and indoor air. While ingesting radon in drinking water has a small risk, inhaling radon is a primary health concern, particularly for smokers or ex-smokers. Radon diffusing up from the soil into homes and buildings is usually the main source of radon in indoor air. Only about 1-2 percent of radon in indoor air comes from drinking water.

If you are concerned about radon in your home, you should test your house and install controls if you find a level of 4 pCi/l or higher in your indoor air. For more information, call USEPA's Radon Hotline (800-SOS-RADON) or visit the web site <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/radon/>.

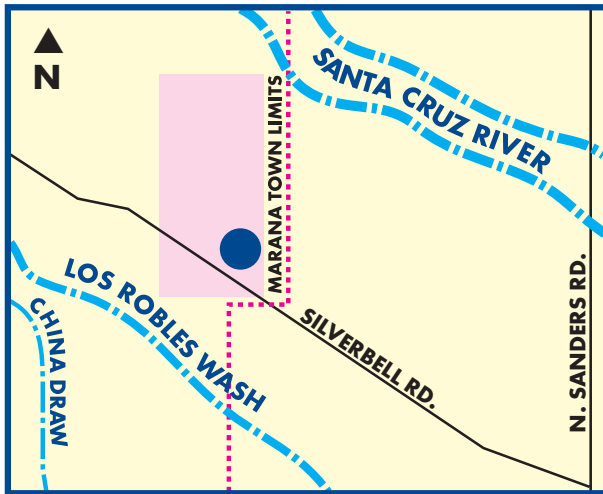
The USEPA does not currently have a final regulation for radon in drinking water. Extra radon monitoring was performed on Tucson Water wells in two quarters in 2000. Test results indicate that when compared with other communities across the country, Tucson has fairly typical concentrations for radon in the water supply. For more information on radon, please visit our website: www.ci.tucson.az.us/water/.

Uranium is a heavy metal, which is highly toxic and radioactive. The USEPA has set a new standard of 30 ppb or approximately 30 pCi/l, which water systems must meet by December 2003.

A SPECIAL NOTE TO AT-RISK POPULATIONS

While the Safe Drinking Water Act regulations are intended to protect consumers throughout their lifetime, some people may be more vulnerable to infections from drinking water than the general population. These "at-risk" populations include: immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, people who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, and in some cases, elderly people and infants. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. USEPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the USEPA's Safe Drinking Water hotline.

During 2001, Tucson Water ensured that your drinking water met all drinking water standards



Tucson Water is pleased to provide you with this Annual Water Quality Report, which contains important information about the quality of the drinking water that we deliver to you. The report will serve as a reference with important information on the quality of water we deliver, as well as test results and other things that you should know about drinking water. It provides you with contacts and phone numbers you may need from time to time, and fulfills a federal regulatory requirement for giving you annual information about the source and quality of your drinking water. The report format follows the guidelines set by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) as part of the Safe Drinking Water Act. This report tells you where your water comes from, what our test results are, and other things you should know about your drinking water.

SILVERBELL WEST WATER SYSTEM

Silverbell West Isolated System is a small water system serving approximately 80 homes. The system is served by well W-001A.

INFORMATION ON EXPECTED DRINKING WATER CONTAMINANTS

In 2001, groundwater was the source of all of the drinking water delivered by Tucson Water. All drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. Our groundwater contains dissolved minerals and organic compounds, which have been leached from rocks, sediments, and plant minerals through which the water traveled. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. As water from rainfall and snowmelt filters through soil to become groundwater, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals, and in some cases, naturally radioactive materials, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of organic matter, animals, or from human activity. One would expect to find beneficial minerals such as calcium and magnesium, harmless minerals such as chloride, bicarbonate, and sulfate, and metals such as iron, copper, arsenic, and lead, which may be beneficial or harmless at low concentrations, but harmful at high concentrations. Groundwater in the Tucson area also contains very small amounts of naturally occurring organic compounds, which were originally formed by decaying vegetable and animal matter. Finally, groundwater may pick up pollutants from human industrial or domestic activities. For this reason, water utilities must currently monitor for approximately 90 regulated and 48 unregulated contaminants.

The following language is required by the USEPA to appear in this report, some of which may not be applicable to deep groundwater

wells, the source of the Tucson Water supply:

- Contaminants that may be present in a source water can include:
- Microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage, agricultural livestock, and wildlife.
 - Inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally-occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming.
 - Pesticides and herbicides, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater runoff, and residential uses.
 - Organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are byproducts of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.
 - Radioactive contaminants, which can be naturally-occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, USEPA regulations limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that must provide the same protection for public health. Bottled water may come from either a surface water source or groundwater source, and may be treated minimally or extensively. For information on the quality of your bottled water, contact the water bottling company.

HOW IS OUR DRINKING WATER TREATED?

The groundwater delivered by Tucson Water meets all drinking water standards without treatment. However, approximately 0.8 parts per million (ppm) of chlorine is added to the drinking water supply to provide assurance that water delivered to customers will remain free of microbiological contamination. This also ensures that the water meets microbiological drinking water standards from the time it is pumped from the ground until it reaches the customer's tap.

WHO DO I CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION?

For more information on this Tucson Water report contact Tom Jefferson or Mohsen Belyani with the Water Quality Management Division.

Call 791-5252 or e-mail your questions to tjeffer1@ci.tucson.az.us or mbelyan1@ci.tucson.az.us

TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

Tucson Water Quality Automated Phone Line	791-4227
Tucson Water Public Information Office	791-4331
Tucson Water Quality Management Division	791-5252
Tucson Water Customer Advocate	791-5945
Tucson Water Customer Service/Billing	791-3242
Tucson Water 24 hour Emergency	791-4133

Additional information is also available from the Tucson Water Website:

www.cityoftucson.org

United States Environmental Protection Agency Safe Drinking Water Hotline:

1-800-426-4791

USEPA Website:

www.epa.gov/safewater/

Si usted desea este documento escrito en español, por favor, llame al:

791-4331

City of Tucson TTY#:

791-2639